

Education and Communication Work Group

Final Charge

Goals

The goals of this workgroup are to:

1. Ensure timely, accurate, and clear communication of information about links between chemical exposures and health is provided to medical, public health, and environmental health professionals (“health professionals”), the general public, and the country’s workforce.
2. Contribute to the development of a network and a pipeline of health professionals competent to help recognize, address, and prevent chemically-related health problems.
3. Offer a model of government/public/workforce/health professional communication and engagement that is timely, responsive, accountable, and transparent.
4. Ensure that discussions between agencies and communities about chemical exposures and health are transparent and maximally accessible.

Charge

To meet these goals, the Education and Communication Workgroup will make actionable recommendations that:

1. Identify audiences that could most effectively use, communicate, and/or benefit from information about chemicals and public health, such as, but not limited to, workers, health care professionals, public health authorities, the media, inhabitants of homes and communities burdened with chemical contamination, parents of young children, pregnant women, and individuals with chemical sensitivities.
2. Identify the knowledge base and tools needed by these target audiences to enhance understanding of the potential effects of chemical exposure on health; potential solutions and preventive strategies; and the roles and responsibilities of government agencies and other institutions in identifying, protecting against, remediating, and, preventing harmful exposures.
3. Facilitate new and creative strategies to enhance understanding of chemical exposures and public health among health professionals, the general public, and the workforce.
4. Facilitate new and creative strategies to enhance the knowledge and skills of health professionals so they can more efficiently and effectively address the concerns of their patients and communities about chemical exposures.

5. Ensure an educational pipeline to produce future health professionals and public health workers who are themselves diverse and prepared to meet the needs of vulnerable and diverse populations.
6. Suggest new strategies that promote meaningful inclusion of stakeholders; provide a structure for stakeholder dialogue; and facilitate the transfer of knowledge and experiences about chemicals and health between and among the public, the workforce, health professionals, government agencies, industry, and other relevant institutions, communities, and individuals.
7. Facilitate new, practical and effective methods to enable members of the public, the workforce, and health professions to relay information to relevant government agencies about specific local chemical exposures or threats of exposure so that community-based knowledge about chemical contamination and public health can become a force-multiplier by enhancing government knowledge about and response to chemical exposures.

Activities

The workgroup will inventory current efforts of government, industry, and non-governmental organizations to:

1. **Provide information and education** about chemical exposures and health to the public, including underrepresented and underserved populations, including people with chemical sensitivities.
2. **Review studies or evaluations** of the effectiveness of these information, communication, and education programs.
3. **Assess existing efforts** to build the capacity of health professionals to address chemical exposures and health.
4. **Identify existing channels** through which government agencies can receive information about chemical exposures and health from the public, the workforce, and members of the health professions.
5. **Review the published and gray literature** on environmental health literacy of health professionals, the general public, and the workforce, as well as issues of concern to the public, the workforce, and the health professions concerning chemical exposures and health.